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GOING TO EUROPE IN 1845

[The following account of a voyage to France in 1845 constitutes the first portion of a manuscript diary, kept by a physician, Dr. J. H. Causten, Jr., concerning whom we have no information other than this record of his travels in Europe. The date of his voyage recalls to mind the voyage to America made by Dickens three years earlier, described by him in *American Notes*. Dr. Causten was more fortunate than Dickens in the weather he encountered, but in one of his fellow-passengers seems to have found almost a counterpart of the lady who requested the captain, as the storm raged, to have a steel conductor attached to the top of every mast, "and to the chimney," that the ship might not be struck by lightning. Further extracts from the diary will be printed in a later issue.]

Sunday 18th May 1845. The packet ship François 1^{er}. Captⁿ. Whedon, whose regular day of sailing was Friday the 16th being detained by head winds, did not leave the wharf until this morning at 10 o'clock. Having been notified of the time of departure, Dr. Stone and myself left the City Hotel, New York, accompanied by Wm. James, E. I. McClery, and A. Fuller, and walked down to the vessel, moored at the wharf at the foot of Albany Street. The weather which for three days had been murky with slight drizzly showers, had now become clear, the sun shining with brilliancy, and the sky of a beautiful azure. We were welcomed on board by the Captain, whose acquaintance we had made on the Wednesday preceding, and found ourselves among the crowd assembled on the deck of the ship, composed of our fellow passengers, the owners of the ship, Messrs. Fox and Livingston, their chief

clerk Mr. Fowler, the newsboys, venders of cigars and the unwashed gaping multitude. All these formed a striking picture, heightened by the busy appearance of the crew of hale, hearty, young seamen busily engaged in putting the ship in trim for sea, putting the sails in order ready for setting, arranging the ropes, and doing the thousand nameless offices preparatory to a voyage.

At 12 o'clock, the steamboat Jacob Bell, which was to tow us down to Sandy Hook, came alongside bringing the Pilot: fastenings were thrown from the ship, secured to the Boat, and the bell announced to all those who did not intend to go down to the Hook that the time had arrived to go ashore. A hasty and hearty shake of the hand, an interchange of adieux, good wishes and parting expressions now took place, and our friends left us and went ashore. The hoarse cry of "all aboard," the retreating footsteps of the retiring company announced that we were really on the point of departure. The pilot jumps upon the wheel house, so as to be within the hearing of both helmsmen of the ship and steamboat, and takes command of the whole, consulting occasionally with the Captain. Dr. Stone and myself with Mr. Fowler take our seats upon the quarter deck, and listen to the hearty song of the sailors who are kipping the anchor and singing "cheerily." After passing the Neapolitan Ship "Ukraine," the U.S. Ship "North Carolina" about to proceed to China with Mr. Alexander H. Everett as Minister, and the Liverpool packet "Yorkshire," and many other vessels at anchor in the bay of New York, the tinkle of a bell announced that lunch was served in the cabin. We descended, found the table covered with many good things, and took a hearty lunch of sardines, ham, tongue, beef a la mode and vegetables: at the close the steward brought the Captain a bottle of wine of the famous "Thorn" brand, a new variety of champagne, and gave as a

toast "fair winds and a short passage," in which we cordially pledged him. I was seated next to Mr. Fowler, whom I found to be a very intelligent man, and a grand nephew of Admiral Count de Grasse, who assisted at the siege of Yorktown in 1781—he stated that the Admiral was six feet seven inches in stature.

After lunch, we ascended to the deck, and found that we were very near Sandy Hook where the steamboat was to leave us. Soon the signal was given for her departure, and those of the friends of the passengers who had accompanied us thus far now took their leave. Tears were abundantly shed on both sides, I especially noticed the parting between a father and daughter, the latter about twelve years of age who was about to visit France to complete her education: her heart was completely full, and a flood of tears fortunately came to her relief. The steamboat took back all the company except ten who were to continue as passengers to Europe; the sails were rapidly run up, studding sails set and the ship proceeded on her course for an hour longer when the pilot boat hove in sight. Dr. Stone and myself now took our stations at the capstan, pencil and paper in hand and again took leave of the dear ones at home, and handed our letters to the Pilot; the Pilot boat No. 7 was now close upon our quarter, the small boat puts off and reaches our side, and the Pilot leaves us—the last link with shore is broken, and we are now really at sea, the high lands of Neversink fast losing themselves in the distance, and before us the trackless ocean, sprinkled here and there with a sail.

As if to divert the minds of the passengers from the melancholy reflections attending losing sight of land, the Captain ordered dinner to be served at once, and we again descended to the cabin, it being five o'clock. The motion of the vessel was now distinctly felt and admonished us to remain below as short a time as possible, or we should be sick. We there-

fore partook of merely a little soup, and again sought the deck, and enjoyed a cigar as much as on shore, whiling away the time in watching the receding shore, and fancying how soon we should become sick. I had purchased in N. York and put into my pocket a package of white ginger, which I found to allay the uneasiness the stomach was about manifesting, and to relieve a little headache caused by the same state of things. The passengers now made their appearance, and we conversed with the captain, mate, and such of our passengers who could speak english as we liked the personal appearance of. Count Aldencrentz, the Swedish minister to Venezuela, was a very sociable intelligent man, spoke several languages fluently, and was about to return to Sweden with his son Nicholas in order that the latter might learn his native language; for the child altho twelve years old had been living in Venezuela ten years and spoke only Spanish. He took a great fancy to Dr. Stone, who danced and played with him, and I was the medium of conversation. He called S. his "intimo amigo," because he permitted himself to be fondled and danced with; but as I was too clumsy a dancer and found his weight too inconvenient to carry, he was not so disposed to like me; Mr. and Mrs. Almira of Havana were also passengers. He was a merchant of Havana, engaged in the Cigar Shipping business, spoke Spanish of course, and a little french: she was a large fat unweildy woman, not handsome in features and rather stupid in conversation; her sole pleasure consisted in playing with a large Spanish Pointer slut, which her husband was taking to Europe, and seemed to care more for than for her. This dog whom she called *tuna*, an abbreviation of Fortuna, was extremely sagacious and altogether a beautiful animal, valued at the moderate sum of three hundred dollars. The lady spoke tolerable Spanish, miserable french, and the conversation with her was always in Spanish. The little girl who had shed so

many tears spoke English and French equally well—her name was Miss Louise Ponsot, and a smart intelligent little girl she was. Her uncle was her companion and protector. He spoke French, about twenty words of English, and was rather a passable man enough to pass a few minutes with: but his stock of information was rather limited. Next came Don Pedro Aleaga of Caraccas, a coffee grower and merchant, a great talker in his own language, and a small talker in french. Next Paulo LaCole, a french barber who had settled in Havana some ten years ago, made some money, and was returning to France to enjoy it. He spoke French and Spanish. Dr. Stone and myself made up the rest of the cabin passengers proper; but I must not forget two females, whose names I did not learn, and who never appeared at table, because of their being sick almost constantly, and confined to their state-rooms.

The afternoon passed in conversation till nine o'clock came, when we had tea, and after swallowing a mouthful, we again sought the deck, as the closeness of the cabin rendered it unpleasant to remain till we should become more accustomed to it. We paced the deck, thinking of home and all the dear ones there, and at eleven, went down to bed. We found the motion of the vessel while in bed rather agreeable than otherwise and soon fell asleep to dream of scenes of home. At an early hour on Monday we rose, partook of a cup of coffee, and went on deck—not a vestige of any thing was to be seen except ourselves. On all sides wherever we cast our eyes, there was nothing visible but sky and water. I confess that the aspect of the *boundless* ocean was not so sublime in my estimation as I had been taught to expect by the descriptions I had heard and read. The compass of sight from any given point, say a ship, to the horizon is only twelve miles, and the distinction in color between the green sea and the sky is so perfect that it makes a regular boundary perfectly distinguishable all around.

Breakfast was served at nine, when we all met at table, and enjoyed our meal. At ten we had the pleasure of seeing four large whales, spouting the air from their lungs in breathing, and forming a beautiful jet-d'eau by the water which the air displaced; we estimated their length at about forty feet rather over than under, and they seemed to be enjoying themselves very much; our first mate Mr. Baxter, who is a nephew of the late Mr. Barker Burnell of Nantucket, and an old whaler, though a young man, and a perfect sailor, told us that he had made several voyages around Cape Horn on whaling expeditions, and had landed on Magellan's Island the southernmost part of the American Continent, where but few persons land except in cases of distress. He describes the cold as intense, and the danger as extremely great from that cause. He also shewed us his journal which he had kept for three years on a single whaling cruize, filled with painted sketches of the various ports and islands he had visited, the mode of harpooning whales, cutting them up, boiling or trying out the oil; and the various vessels he had met in the course of the cruize—altogether it was very entertaining.

Our own vessel also acquired an additional interest in our eyes, when our Captain informed us that Captain Benjamin Morrell, who made so many voyages of discovery in the southern seas had been second mate on board of her for a considerable period. We read his published travels, furnished us by the Captain, with additional interest after learning this news. Time slipped by rapidly, lunch and dinner were both disposed of and we were again on deck, smoking our cigars when we saw one of the sailors named Stanley, formerly a clerk in the Custom house, who in a freak of fancy had shipped as a sailor, go to the side rather rapidly and vomit pretty freely. Poor fellow tho' much disposed to be amused we could not help pitying him, not knowing how soon our turn would

come. I gave him some of my ginger for which he was very grateful, and a few doses together with constant exercise on deck soon relieved him. On tuesday the day passed pretty much as the preceding. We had the pleasure however of seeing a school of porpoises which played about our bows, leaping over and over half out of the water, and gambolling with great glee. We ventured upon the forecastle to observe the sport of harpooning them, but the vessel moving at the rate of nine knots per hour did not allow of any being caught. On the invitation of the Captain and his assurance of there being no danger, we ventured out upon the bowsprit to the jib-boom to which we held fast, and watched the bows of the vessel cut the water. It was a beautiful sight, but one I thought rather too venturesome for young sailors. After dinner while reclining on the ship's quarter, I was much surprised to see my friend Stone, suddenly rise, look over the ship's side and After learning that he was perfectly relieved I could not avoid crowing a little as he had promised to cure me and had had no opportunity, but had become sick himself: he attributed his illness which was but momentary, to swallowing accidentally a small piece of the cigar he was smoking. Fortunately he had no return of it, and as to myself I was not seasick at all. Speaking of sea-sickness I may mention that one of the ladies made it a point apparently to be taken ill during the time of meals, and every day at breakfast, lunch, dinner and tea, besides at night, we were entertained with her heavenly strains. The Capt. asked me what would relieve her, ginger which I had offered having failed: I prepared an effervescing mixture which she declined taking, with the frank declaration that she "had no faith in American doctors." The Captain finally succeeded in inducing her to take a wine-glass full, which quieted the stomach for several hours and permitted her fellow passengers to enjoy their repose.

Wednesday nothing remarkable. Thursday we passed in reading and walking the deck pretty well tired of the sea already. We passed many of the sea nautilus called by the sailors the "Portuguese-man-of-war;" they are almost peculiar to the Gulf Stream on which we were now coming; have a rich lilac color bordered with crimson, and look very pretty. I cannot undertake to describe them as we could not succeed in catching any of them. In their general appearance however they resemble the paper nautilus, but have a more gelatinous appearance. On Saturday the wind which had theretofore been favorable fell, and we were nearly becalmed; we were now on the Banks of Newfoundland, the fog so thick that you could not see a ship's length ahead, and the sea rather rough, the vessel rolling from side to side, so that we were rather incommoded at table by the dishes dancing fantastically, and sometimes spilling their contents in our laps. We observed a vessel within sight all day, and towards evening she approached us near enough to distinguish colors, when the Captain ordered our flag to be run up; she did not answer as she did not appear to have a flag on board, but on examining her closely with a spy-glass we saw two sailors holding a piece of cotton cloth with a name on it painted backwards and after studying it out we found she was the bark Pontiac of Portsmouth. She passed from us shortly afterwards bound home, but did not approach sufficiently near to speak her. After the rest of the passengers had retired Dr. Stone and myself were with the Captain in the cabin, examining our position on the chart, when at midnight we heard a great outcry on deck many voices apparently together, we ran up and saw directly before us in the mist a light which proved to be in the bow of a vessel. We had also a light; our Captain gave immediate orders to port the helm and we passed our neighbour close enough to throw a biscuit on board of her. The noise had awakened

our passengers who rushed on deck in their night-dress in great trepidation, fancying the ship was on fire. A few moments put us out of danger, and we retired to bed tired and sleepy.

Sunday morning had some conversation with our Captain as to the propriety of carrying lights on the bows during foggy weather the benefit of which had been so evident the preceding night; he stated his conviction that the Liverpool packets *England* and *United States* must have come in contact during foggy weather or at night, and with such force as to break in the side of both; their cargoes being composed in a great degree of iron there was no delay in their filling and going down. This seemed to me very plausible and would account for there being no survivors. The melancholy reflections to which this subject gave rise made us willingly change the conversation. Captain Wheeden is a native of Connecticut, and on the breaking out of the war was offered by Decatur a warrant of midshipman on board the frigate *U. States*. This he was forced to decline from the unwillingness of his parents to let him go to sea, he has unceasingly regretted it ever since, because he has followed the sea as a merchantman almost ever since, having entered as a common sailor on board of a vessel bound southward in 1813 was captured, taken into Dartmoor and there imprisoned; he was liberated prior to the famous or rather infamous massacre of the prisoners under the orders of Col. Shortland, and has risen by his good conduct to his present position. His father was during the revolution a contractor for military clothing, made a large sum of money nominally was paid in depreciated currency at par, lost every thing and completely ruined with an immense amount of Continental paper in his hands. After his death in poverty, our captain was the sole reliance of the family consisting of the widow and two sisters who are still living—hence he has never felt him-

self at liberty to marry and perhaps never will. Mr. LaCole was today very sick with an irritation of the liver, fever, coated tongue, headache, etc. He consulted me, and I prescribed an Emetic of Ipecac, followed by Blue pill at night which relieved him entirely and rapidly.

Monday morning. The Captain roused us at an early hour with word that one of the steerage passengers had a bad leg which might require amputation. We rose at once and went to see the patient, who was a poor devil of a frenchman, who was working his passage to France. He had been put in the steerage, where he had no accommodations, slept on a box and had his legs hanging over its end, - - - and they were enormously swollen. Dr. S. and I consulted as to what should be done, and agreed to bandage them, which promptly relieved the swelling and restored them to their natural condition. We had hardly finished with him when the carpenter came to us with his hand badly cut with a chisel which had fallen, and he had endeavoured to catch. Compression relieved the bleeding, and simple dressings of lint, plaster and a bandage were all that were necessary. Mrs. Armida spent the day on deck playing with "tuna," and laughing in the most stupid manner at any thing that occurred. The monotony of sea life was felt by us all. We had read every thing we had in the shape of books, we had talked all our news old, and to enliven us the captain proposed a game of shuffle board: any thing rather than nothing, so we acceded to his proposition with alacrity. - - - The Captain, Armida, Stone and I, on one side. The Count, Nicholas, Aleaga, & LaCole, on the other. We gained three games, found it rather stupid and with one accord stopped. At night while writing in my journal Armida begged me to state the fact of our gaining the only three games that were played. The next day the carpenter made a draught board, and Nicholas got some white and black buttons from his intimo

amigo, and played almost all day. Mrs. Armida was his partner or antagonist, and she complained of his want of integrity in playing. The captain undertook to play with the dog as his mistress had done, but rather more roughly, and having plagued it some time, the animal in revenge bit him in the hand rather severely. This alarmed him, and as the hand became tumid and painful at night I prescribed that it should be bathed with turpentine, and poulticed. This relieved it entirely, and preserved the beast from any further annoyance. Stone and I assisted the Captain in working up his day's progress every evening, and tracing our course upon the chart. On the 28th we wrote down the name of the ship, captain, owners, time out, latitude and longitude, with our names and that all were well, and requesting the finder to send the paper to Lieut. Mawry at the Dept. of Maps and Charts, signed and sealed it, enclosed it in a bottle, closely sealed and threw it into the sea, where it floated, and was soon out of sight. I regret that I did not preserve a copy of it. Our steerage passengers were a source of a good deal of amusement. One of them reminded me of Miss Mary Cutts whom she closely resembled. They prepared their cookery at the Galley, and seemed to have an endless variety of combinations judging from the savory odors that emanated from their mixtures. They were french and germans, no americans, so that even in or out of the cabin, we were obliged nolens volens to speak french and spanish: this after a little while lost its novelty and we talked in either language as we happened to meet those who spoke the one or the other, and promised ourselves great benefit on our arrival in France from the facilities which our intercourse with french passengers had afforded us in speaking their language.

Time rolled on varied by the occurrence of the meal hours as the only change of occupation, except the occasional breaking of a wave over the decks, wetting every thing and every

body, the varying colors of the ocean, at times blue, green, apple-green, dark inky purple, crested with foamy billows, or almost smooth, and on one night a thunder shower: I was just going to bed when the thunder commenced, and as I was extremely desirous to see a storm I went on deck to witness it if it should arise, but was disappointed, it was a very common place "April" thunder shower, the ship pitching but moderately, and the waves but little higher than usual. I am inclined to think the grandeur of the sea much exaggerated by extravagant poetical fancies, who rely more upon their vivid imaginations than the fact in describing the majesty of the ocean: it must however be confessed that we have had little or no rough weather, and hence it could be hardly expected that the sublimity of ocean scenery could be observed without the occurrence of something more severe than a moderate gale of wind or a thunder shower.

Thursday June 5 at two o'clock in the morning we saw the light house on the Scilly isles at the entrance of the British Channel, and at five an English pilot from Falmouth, with boat No. 7 boarded us, but was much disappointed in finding we were bound to France. The sight of a new face was very agreeable, and we detained him (or rather the Captain said he detained *us*) more than an hour, gave us the London newspapers, promised to have us reported in Lloyd's list as 16 days from New York, was furnished with some biscuit - - -, and bid us good morning; the line of the English coast soon hove in sight, looking like a mere line in the distance and enveloped in fog. It was too distant to distinguish any thing even with a spy-glass, and on the south we still had the sky and water for our boundary; just before dinner time, five o'clock, a pilot boat hove in sight with the tri-color at her mast head; our flag was run up and it appeared that the Pilot boat had no small boat to put out; this obliged him to run up close to us so as to come

alongside, and delayed him till near six o'clock when he jumped aboard, and presented a very venerable appearance: he was an old man of near seventy with a face that reminded me strongly of the portraits I have seen of Paul Jones; spoke but little English and had been out of Havre fifteen days, so that he had little or no gossip, for I cannot call it news, to communicate. He did not seem to be much of a sailor or pilot either, and our captain continued in command of his vessel, occasionally talking with him, but really considering him of about as much value as the fifth wheel to a hack would be. Our ship was kept on a south east course and at eight o'clock we were about five miles north of the Caskets, a series of frightful rocks to the east of the island of Alderney, the island so distinguished for the fine cattle it produces. A strict watch was set, and we were promised to be landed in Havre in the morning. We went to bed in high spirits at the idea of being there the next day. The next morning the coast of France was in full view and at nine o'clock we saw the cape of Le Havre on which are the two light houses nearest to Havre and at ten we had a good view of that city, our promised haven. I confess that although the approach to Havre is beautiful and the town itself quite picturesque I was disappointed in its being much smaller than I had anticipated. It is situated on the Northern bank of the Seine upon a bold shore, the town apparently in strata of houses rising one above the other, like an amphitheatre, and the summit crowned by a thick piece of woods mostly composed of small trees which add immensely to the beauty of the prospect, particularly at the present time as they are just putting out their foliage and blossoms.

At ten o'clock the tide was sufficiently high to admit of our entering the harbour, and we sailed by the pier which is at its mouth, and covered with people gazing at the new arrival, sailed along a distance of half the town and cast anchor within

a stone's throw of the wharf. We were immediately boarded by numerous boats, the health officer, custom house officers, servants from hotels &c, &c. The Captain saw me putting some letters in my pocket and asked if they were sealed. I told him some of them were sealed and I had promised to deliver them: he said he must request me to put them in the mail bag, since if I landed with them and the custom house officers should examine my person, which they sometimes took the liberty of doing, and should discover them, the ship would be liable to a heavy fine—under those circumstances I of course had no alternative but to put them in the mail bag. In the mean time the servant of the “Hotel de l’Europe,” appeared, and told us, which was confirmed by the Captain, that our baggage would have to be taken to the Custom House for examination, and we had no reason for delaying our going to the Hotel; we therefore got into a boat, and were landed at the Custom house door, entered it and in compliance with form, were interrogated as to whether we had any deposition to make, to which we replied in the negative, and were suffered to depart. We went on through one half of the town to the principal street, Rue de Paris, where our hotel was situated and found ourselves at last on terra firma.

